4/17/71

Dear Sylvia,

Relet 13, it is worse than I indicated with publishers, they has been other flakery like Markham's (Gertz', for example), and you are quite correct, it is bernabei who raved about your Givens-Ball-Belin work. It is, in my opinion, only slightly exaggerated. It is very good. However, especially because I has not been published, I take time for a few comments on what I think will improve it. I hope you will think about them after reading all I will say, not jump to a hasty conclusion from any initial comment or comments. I begin this before breakfast and I'm pressed for time, as always.

I think you should change and narrow your focus, to Ball and Belin, and I'll explain why. I think you ought be less severe with Givens, and again I'll explain. And you needlessly weaken this excellent thing with unwarranted and unprovable conjecture about the Members of the Commission (none of whom has earned my undying love), when another formulation, as, for example, in terms of their responsibilities, would be accurate and stronger. I seriously doubt any one read that long thing by Ball and Belin, with the possible exception of Dulles. If you haveno way of knowing what they did or did not read, you are on solid ground on saying it was available to them, prepared, as so many other ignored things were, and it was their obligation to know its contents-and all were lawyers well prepared to understand it.

Given was in a bad spot. He is black, had a police record, was subject to all kinds of serious pressures and threats. Whether or not they were articulated, as they may have been, they did not have to be. He knew the spot he was in. On the other side, you write in terms of what he said, without any basis for it. I have had much experience in these things, and I tell you, aside from what, if you reflect, you will find amply illustrated, that what the reports and affidavits set forth is only what those drafting them elected to include. Given may have said much more and had it filtered out. Perjury is a deliberate false swearing to the material. I wonder if, strictly speaking, he did commit this crime. The criminal acts were by the feds on all levels, and the cops.

Added: bottom page two, first ref to LHO's presence on first floor. Use the index to WW for Junior Jarman and you'll find that the police records, such as they are, on what LHO said when questioned, establish he had to have been there. Remember, he saw Junior walking past? He could not have knee this without having been there. You might even want to add that Dougherty, as the key point on the fifth floor, and the only witness, good or bad, saw nobody going down after the shot, etc.

Page 3, "December 9, 1963." Epstein belongs here like Lucifer in the cloister. Reggardless of the opinion we both share of Vince, it is not Epstein who brought CBS to light but Vince, and it was twice published before Epstein appeared. More, Epstein did not refer to that which you do, others had published the same thing earlier, and it is not alone Inquest which "raised a furor of doubt about the Warren Report" at that time-or earlier.

Top page 4, Carolyn Arnold: Your formulation is in error. I brought this matter to light in PM, and you can get a fairly complete story by looking under Arnold in the index, especially by careful reading of the two reports, the printed ones and that withheld. You can mkmg strengthen your work much by repeating the FBI duplicity, for what Arnold actually said is 12:25, and the FBI lied to make it appear as 12:15 or earlier.

Middle of 5 you refere to the Comission, as I comment above, members. I think you should amend

Afterthought: on Epstein and CD 1, perhaps you might want to consider whether you would like to include that Liebeler leaked this classified document, which he had no business having because it was classified, to Epstein, to direct attention away from his own transgressions and toward those of others. He used Epstein as his vehicle for self-justification, and Epstein was always the whore. I think I go into this in WWII.

Top 6: here you address Givens as I do above. I think you might want to amplify this, the proper context, with a short added and expanding clause.

Next graphs: would you consider a few of those well-chosen comment that you in particular chose so well about Murray and his function there, his obligations, his access to everything? I think it would have more meaning than the words you actually address to the Members, and is necessary for the understanding of the uninformed reader, esp. with the quite proper earlier comment on what can be expected of the ARC.

Do you think Givens was questioned only because he was a DPD employee? Is it not reasonable to assume that when they were looking for him as a potential suspect, this may have had something to do with it, and with his subsequent compliance with whatever seems to have been demanded of him?

7: September 20 wrong date. First graph repeat of 12:15 error.

Cigarette package: suggest slight qualification, since this one could have been the property of other employee, as "which could have been Givens'".

My plans for ABOUT OSWALD, when I return to this, which may be sooner than my earlier plans, may, if there is space, deal with the deliberate framing of Oswald. If so, there may be parts of this to which I might want to refer. If that case, I will ask you. And in that case, if it should by then be published, I'd want to be able to cite publication.

I think this kind of individual examination of individual aspects of evidence serves many useful purposes. I tried to encourage it in others when I first saw the draft of Rankard that May then refused to expand and update. And I think you have one of the more important. There is no doubt of official deliberateness.

In the light of the apparent feigned outrage, have you considered writing a direct challenge to those exalted upholders of the law and its traditions, DAD? I do this all the time. I wrote Forman, for example, Hanes and Bano, telling them exactly what I believed and proposed saying, and I solicited refutation, even any reason to consider my interpretation might be wrong. Do I have to tell you what I can now do to any if they now challenge?

Hastily,